

# *for Mike McClure . . .*

## SCENES FROM A MARRIAGE

For six weeks I was glued to the television every Friday night at 9:00 with repeats on Tuesdays at 10:30.

What bad actors, I thought at first. Then the genius of it occurred to me. They were acting just like real people; banal and undramatic and complacent. Eager to forgive and forget the horrors of the last episode.

I grew comfortable with their middle class sloth: Johan's reading in bed in his pajamas, Marianne's distain for sex. Their late night cheese sandwiches and beer nourished me.

"Too depressing," announced my wife when Johan declared his love for another woman and packed for Paris the next morning. But I kept watching. I even egged him on.

Two episodes later, when Johan turns into a pathetic little man, over-drinking and smoking brown little cigarettes and he loses his self respect, feeling belittled by his peers and not really in love with his teenage mistress,

and Marianne finds herself as a woman and discovers orgasm, and Johan wants to crawl home in shame but she won't have him because it's really better this way, I said, "I told you so, Johan!"

Now I've come to identify with them. His short awkward beard reminiscent of several I've had, his battered Volvo just like my battered Volvo. But the series has ended and I regard the tv guide with contempt and despair and a vague sense of loss.